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to him in his cell and he is told to announce the presence, and to lead the brethren to a hidden cave where a fresh blooming rose can be found (in late winter) beside a spring. A chapel is to be erected about this spring and in its waters the sick will be healed. The trick succeeds. His own exaltation carries conviction. The sick are healed and great is the fame of Silver Cross and also great the envy and annoyance of Saint Leofric's. Brother Richard the Anointed dwells in a dream of bliss, which has completely enwrapped even this clear thinking, restless, honest seeker.

Until the fatal night when chance reveals to him the fact that the marvelous Presence was but a trick and that the Madonna was a mortal woman . . . deeper indeed was his degradation, for this woman was Morgen Fay, a Magdalen of the town, hunted out by a zealous priest and hiding in the woods protected by a noble lover. A touch of resemblance in the girl's beauty to the Madonna of the altar gave this lover, Sir Robert Sommerville (a whimsical cynic greatly desiring some Silver Cross land), the first idea, which he suggested to Abbot Mark.

But Morgen Fay's life was broken on the rack of the church's ambition, too. She is a very appealing character and very real in the days of her prosperity, appealing afterward if sometimes too distant in will power and self contained strength.

In that awful night Richard Englefield throws off the bonds of the church and proclaims its falsity. But the church is too powerful. He is proclaimed to be quite mad, a victim of the power of the devil, as those who would call attention to intrigues in high places are apt to be. The zealous priest suspects Morgen Fay, and the mob are told she is the "devil's mistress." She is hunted down and thrown into prison to be burned at the stake. Brother Richard, the "poor madman," is kept in close confinement. But he escapes and is aided by a young burgher of the town to whom the adventure appeals.

When he knows the truth about Morgen, Richard refuses to escape without her. His brain, cleared now of all mysticism, takes command of the situation and Morgen is stolen from the prison and escapes with him on a ship to London.

The rest of the book tells of their life together, as brother and sister, hunted but happy. The church which they had offended, not by what was done but by what was found out, finds them at times, but lets them go, for fear of more revelations. They work their way through to an understanding of Truth and are happy.

There is power and charm in this book, and also much which may cause controversy. All of which should insure it good measure of success.

GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

DOORS OF THE NIGHT. By Frank L. Packard. George H. Doran Company.

SPRING fashions in fiction run more markedly than ever toward the mystery-crime-detective tale, with the extravaganza-adventure-crime yarn as a frequent subspecies. At a rough guess, without actually taking a census, at least a third—maybe more—of this season's output belongs to this family. It is the lineal, though somewhat aristocratic, descendant of the good old Nick Carter breed, with the venerable Beadle's Dime Novel as its grandfather. And it is a quite respectable family nowadays; no longer scorned by any but the narrowest of the "highbrow" readers, who do not matter greatly. If any amateur, or any writer of another type, imagines it is easy to write a really good "thriller" let him try it! He will soon be disillusioned. It's by no means so simple as it looks.

Mr. Packard is a recognized master practitioner of this popular art. His "Jimmie Dale" is still current and there is an impressive list of successful titles to his credit. He has the trick of it, excellently. If you stop to think over such a story, to analyze it slowly and carefully, it is apt to strike one as rather an absurdity, but you mustn't stop to think, you mustn't want to stop, and it's the author's business to see to it that you trot along so steadily and rapidly that it never occurs to you to pause. He must shove and keep on shouting, "Plenty of room up front," so persuasively that you do keep on moving in spite of any obstacle. Mr. Packard knows how to do just that.

This latest offering is fully up to his previous batting record. It is another home run. It begins normally with a satisfying murder of an incautious capitalist who commits the indiscretion of keeping half a million dollars' worth of rubies in his safe. His noble secretary is suspected and the hunt is started. It runs rapidly into the spacious underworld, where there is room enough for all sorts of things to happen. They do happen, plentifully. Structurally it is a series of episodic short stories, each fairly complete and good for a reel or two in itself, but with enough of a "continued in our next" about it to keep the reader moving. It is a useful technic, because it is as expansible or as collapsible as an accordion. Maybe it is not the highest form of this art, but it suffices.

There is a neat touch in this story in giving the hero and the chief villain interchangeable personalities. It mixes things up pleasantly and adds variety to the general run around. The machinery of the whole movement, including the mysterious lady in black who turns up whenever needed, like clockwork runs smoothly and without any unnecessary clicking or evident friction. Mr. Packard has scored once more.

THE MARRIAGE OF PATRICIA PEPPERDAY. By Grace Miller White. Little, Brown & Co.

A CLEAN, bright style, free from affectations, and a well constructed plot make this story a pleasantly acceptable specimen of the "thriller" type. Indeed, in some of its scenes it rises above the level of mechanical mystery fiction and attains dignity and a human quality in its situations. Moreover, the motivation of the action is natural. One feels that the characters are not merely performing upon forced motives in order to make a story: what they do in their varied adventuring arises logically out of events, even though they are rather theatrical happenings. The whole story is a bit stagey, but the makeup and grease paint are not too greatly in evidence. Most of the cruder faults of such stories are notably absent, and if their place is not wholly taken up by positive virtues their absence is something of a merit.

Patricia is the girl among the Pepperday triplets, and the whole trio has just taken to the stage when the tale opens, abandoning their college training in order to help out in a family financial disaster. The almost too beautiful Michael is wrongfully convicted of a murder, and there are other complications. Patricia in the course of her attempts to vindicate and free her convicted brother manages to fall in love with and marry the District Attorney who has convicted him—not knowing his real identity. He is also unaware that she is the convict's sister. The discovery naturally leads to an uncomfortable situation, which the author handles skillfully to soundly dramatic effects, though here, as elsewhere, she is prone to drag out a scene to undue length. The rest of the working out of the plot must be left to the reader to follow for himself. Some of the minor characters are very well done, especially the half-witted daughter of the landlady of the theatrical lodging house where the murder happened. The picturing of the insane, or nearly insane, is always a skittish business, tending to be either absurd or extravagant. In this case it is unusually successful. The story as a whole is inoffensive to taste or morals—which is saying a good deal nowadays—and it certainly moves.

SALT LAKE. By Pierre Benoit. Alfred A. Knopf.

IT is odd to find a French romancer traveling to Salt Lake City for the material for a semi-historic tale of intrigue and adventure. He appears to be "off his beat," patrolling a strange country wherein he is not quite at home. Yet it is perhaps more surprising that the field has been so much neglected, as it is rich in possibilities. With the exception of Stevenson's serio-comic excursion into it it has been wholly overlooked by the better equipped writers, though there was an outbreak of anti-Mormon fiction some forty years ago, which, however, produced nothing of lasting literary quality. It may be that M. Benoit has at last started the pack. They could find good hunting.

This story, now translated (by Florence and Victor Llona) has had a great popular success in France, where it became a "best seller" immediately upon its appearance last year. France has its large market for the well made "thriller," just as much as we have, though it is apt to demand a rather better quality of goods so far as workmanship goes. M. Benoit has been accused by French critics of having merely built a "movie scenario." It is that; one can hardly see how it can escape the screen, as it would probably make a first class attraction. But it is a little more than that, being melodrama of fairly good "values" and with some attempt at subtlety in character analysis, especially as applied to the lady in the case. But its psychology is wholly Gallic, though one must admit that it may be correctly applicable to the heroine who is, herself, a Celt, being pure Irish in ancestry.

The effect of making Brigham Young something of a Frenchman with polished manners and the mind of a Jesuit is not so happy. M. Benoit's history is not always "on straight" in minor points, but they really do not matter much, and he has made a faithful, painstaking attempt to reproduce something of the general atmosphere of Mormondom in the late fifties. He has not overdone it. The Mormon world remains merely a background against which his central figures stand out in high relief; the woman, a Jesuit missionary, an American soldier (a lieutenant in the army that took possession of Salt Lake City in the fiasco of 1858) and a singular young man who begins life as a Methodist preacher, but becomes a convert to Mormonism and eventually rises to be head of that church.

The woman, picturesquely named Annabel Lee, is a vivacious young widow, temporarily at Salt Lake to settle the affairs of her late husband's estate, when the story opens. Lieut. Rutledge and the Rev. Jemini Gwinnett both fall in love with her. At first she inclines to Rutledge, but then suddenly takes up with the handsome parson, who appears to have bewitched her. She marries him, not knowing that he has already turned Mormon and has acquired a first wife, who is a daughter of Elder Rigdon Pratt. So there you are—the lady has abandoned her own religion (Roman Catholic) and is unwittingly become wife No. 2 in her husband's harem.

Naturally she revolts, tries to escape, and has the deuce and all of a time, but when the Jesuit finally does succeed in giving her a clean chance to get away, with the connivance of Brigham himself, she refuses and goes back voluntarily to her remarkable husband! It is a thoroughly Gallic bit of sex psychology, but M. Benoit manages to make it plausible enough.

There is a sub-plot involving the Jesuit and the Indians, which is a good short story in itself, and gives a chance for a fine finish for the devoted priest, though it has little or nothing to do with the main theme. There are many strikingly dramatic incidental scenes: good situations that would show up excellently on the stage. In fact, a good deal of the thing is rather theatrical, but soundly so. It can hardly be called cheap at any point.

It ends logically and uncompromisingly on a note of tragedy, with the unfortunate woman as an inmate of a hospital-asylum for old and decrepit folk—a bit of "wretched human waste," drudging in a dingy kitchen, aged before her time, abandoned by her prosperous and cynical husband. Her confrontation with Rutledge, her former lover and now a General and newly made Governor of the Territory, is a tremendously effective bit of dramatic irony.

As a historical novel or a serious study of early Mormonism the book is of no great moment, though it is sound enough in its main lines. That field is still practically untouched. Regarded as a good story of romantic adventure with incidental psychological interest, the tale is entitled to a fairly high rating. It might very well become a best seller here as in France.

THE HANDS OF NARA. By Richard Washburn Child. E. P. Dutton & Co.

MR. CHILD always has something to say, as well as an arresting manner of saying it. From his earliest writing his work has always had a more solid content, a more matured thoughtfulness, than is the case with most of our recently successful makers of fiction. The same quality that has made of him a highly acceptable Ambassador to Italy is evident in all his writing. But, with all deference to his Excellency of the moment, this novel is not quite his best, though it does stand out head and shoulders above the ruck of ephemeral fiction. It has not the exact proportions or the finish of his best short stories—some of which, especially some of the earlier ones that appeared in the *Collier's* of rather more than a decade ago, belong in the very front rank of such American work. And that is no mean compliment, since neither before nor since has there been so much genuinely good short story production as that which marked the first ten years or so of the century.

This novel is pitched in too high a key. It opens with a truly splendid overture, promising great things, but as it progresses the orchestration thins a little and the final harmony is just a little flat. But it is full of

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